

# **El Toro Road Commercial Corridor Revitalization and Revisioning Strategy**

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**Prepared for:  
City of Lake Forest  
Lake Forest Redevelopment Agency  
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Cover: Illustrative view of the El Toro Corridor 20 years after adoption and implementation of the strategy.

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# SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE STRATEGY

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## STRATEGY PURPOSE

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The purpose of this document is to strategize for the revitalization and revisioning of the El Toro Redevelopment Project Area in the City of Lake Forest. This area spans 3.3 miles along El Toro Road, extending from the I-5 freeway northeast to Trabuco Road. The strategy speaks to the community vision for this El Toro Road Commercial Corridor (the “Corridor”) within the context of real estate market realities and contemporary urban planning and design principles. The strategy was prepared by Sedway Group, urban and real estate economists, and Urban Design Studio, urban planners and designers. It is intended to serve the City of Lake Forest and the Lake Forest Redevelopment Agency (City/Agency) as a strategic guide to enhancing the Corridor’s commercial base and transforming the area into a strong community focal point and asset, meeting community needs on many levels.

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## STRATEGY FORMULATION

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Many efforts contributed to preparation of this strategy, including a market analysis, a commercial center analysis and, most importantly, a series of three community workshops. The focus of the market analysis, separately provided to the City/Agency, was to assess the area’s existing commercial market conditions and its future potential. The analysis examined the area’s strengths and weaknesses, and included recommendations for improving the area’s retail base,

especially in the “core” commercial area, defined as the area extending from I-5 to approximately Muirlands Boulevard. The consultant undertook a commercial center analysis that included an in-depth opportunities and constraints assessment of the six commercial centers located in the “core” commercial area. This assessment examined physical and design characteristics influencing shopper perceptions, such as circulation and parking, architecture, signage, landscape, safety, and pedestrian amenities. Both the market and commercial center analysis were incorporated into the strategy’s components.

The third and most critical effort contributing to preparation of the strategy was a series of three community workshops, attended by City residents, merchants, and public representatives. The workshops were held between October 1997 and March 1998, with total attendance of 240. In addition, approximately 80 written responses were submitted to the City/Agency.

The workshops provided an opportunity for public input into the Revitalization and Revisioning Strategy, through a range of mechanisms, such as community assessment of strengths and weaknesses of the Corridor, evaluation of landscape and design features, a land planning effort for the “core” commercial area, and feedback to the market analysis findings and preliminary strategy recommendations. This community input was incorporated into the strategy to the extent possible given market, planning, and urban design considerations.

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**VISION STATEMENT**

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A vision statement guiding the formulation of the Revitalization and Revisioning Strategy was developed to reflect community consensus for the area, as follows:

*The El Toro Road Commercial Corridor will become a vibrant, thriving, successful commercial and business district that is the social center point of the community with growth and prosperity guided by the Revitalization Strategy.*

The Revitalization and Revisioning Strategy envisions the Corridor to become the “Main Street” of the City with distinctive districts designed to meet regional, community, and neighborhood objectives. This area will serve as the social, civic, and cultural heart of the City. Economic development programs will enhance the commercial centers, revitalize buildings and landscaping, improve circulation, and provide for business expansion, retention, and attraction. This vision is founded upon the market analysis completed as part of the revitalization study.

The Revitalization and Revisioning Strategy builds upon the Lake Forest General Plan Vision for the Future adopted in June 1994. The “Vision for the Future” is the foundation of the General Plan and provides the basis for its goals, policies, and programs to guide future growth and development in the City. It states the “Major public activity areas will create a distinctive, individual identity for the City that relies upon the established image of lakes, creeks, forests and open space.

“Fiscal stability, facilities and necessary public services will be sustained through the expansion of economic activities and retention

of existing businesses. Lake Forest will provide an attractive, safe, and healthy environment in which to live, work, and recreate.”

The Revitalization and Revisioning Strategy further implements the Mission Statement of the City’s Strategic Plan for Economic Development adopted in March 1995 that states “the City will support and promote a positive business climate for economic growth and stability through a proactive approach to enhance business development and community life.”

The Revitalization and Revisioning Strategy provides the guidance, direction, and prioritization to create the City’s objectives to accomplish the revitalization of the Corridor from its current status into a vibrant, thriving, successful commercial and business district.

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**KEY CONCEPTS**

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The Corridor strategizing effort set in motion broad community visions of what is desired and what can be. Throughout the effort, several concepts continually emerged, involving the image and appearance of the Corridor and its commercial uses, its community function, and its physical environment. Foremost, there is strong community recognition of the importance of the intersection of El Toro Road and Rockfield Boulevard, the study area’s commercial focal point. Because of the centrality of this intersection, a focus of the strategy is to enhance its commercial orientation, promoting the concentration of strong performing commercial centers with an attractive tenant mix.

The following nine components embody the major strategy concepts, and are designed to realize the community vision for the Corridor.

- ❖ Lake Forest's "Main Street"
- ❖ Distinctive Districts
- ❖ Community, Civic, and Cultural Heart
- ❖ Enhance Commercial Center Attraction
- ❖ Retailer Attraction and Retention
- ❖ Major Center Improvements
- ❖ Signature Architecture and Landscaping
- ❖ Pedestrian Access and Environment
- ❖ Enhanced Transportation Circulation

The realization of the Corridor's revitalization and revisioning will require a substantial City/Agency and community effort. Moreover, strategy implementation will require time to fully reap the benefits of these efforts, likely extending over the next decade or more. However, as City/Agency and private investment occurs in keeping with the strategy components, the Corridor will be transformed in the image of its community, serving as a focal point for commercial, cultural, community, and civic activities.

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## STRATEGY ORGANIZATION

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This strategy document is organized in an easy-to-read manner, facilitating City/Agency implementation, with this introductory

section comprising the first of five sections. The next section, Section 2, presents the key strategy components, and includes specific guidance and implementation recommendations to assist in the attainment of a revitalized Corridor. Section 3 presents several illustrations representative of some of the strategy's physical components relative to representative area commercial centers. Section 4 discusses implementation tools available to the City/Agency, while Section 5 prioritizes the strategy's components into short-term, mid-term, and long-term actions.

## SECTION 2: STRATEGY COMPONENTS

*This section presents the nine components comprising the Corridor Revitalization and Revisioning Strategy. Each component is introduced by a brief statement, followed by the specification of actions designed to enhance the area and create a more attractive, functional, and vibrant commercial district that meets the needs of Lake Forest.*

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### LAKE FOREST'S "MAIN STREET"

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The focus of this strategy component is to transform the Corridor into the Main Street of Lake Forest, encouraging a vibrant and attractive commercial district that invites shoppers and other visitors to the area. This component highlights how implementation of strategy recommendations combining urban planning, design, and real estate economics can create the look and feel of a main street, satisfying unmet community and regional needs.

- ❖ Celebrate the range of business types along El Toro Road.
- ❖ Underground existing and future electrical transmission and telephone lines wherever possible.
- ❖ Limit building heights to protect views.
- ❖ Encourage multiple uses for public spaces, including landscaping, public art displays, location for restricted public signage and holiday decorations.

- ❖ Eliminate uses and zoning districts not consistent with the character envisioned for El Toro Road.
- ❖ Identify strategies for creating a link between the east and west sides of El Toro Road.
- ❖ Introduce new retail uses along El Toro Road to include crafts, electronics, food retailer/grocery, home improvement and furnishing stores, restaurants, apparel stores, outlet stores, book stores and department stores.

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### DISTINCTIVE DISTRICTS

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The strategy recommends that the Corridor's land uses follow a tiered organizational structure, creating area districts that serve separate functions, all of which are designed to meet community and regional needs. The recommended districts concentrate uses with regional and sub-regional demand near the I-5 freeway, while more neighborhood- and community-serving uses are located further from the freeway, limiting the eastern portion of the Corridor's traffic burden. The districting recommendation also incorporates community desires for key entertainment and commercial services, transforming the Corridor into a lively, diversified commercial district.

- ❖ Commercial land uses on El Toro Road should be organized into three distinct business districts:
  - regional, visitor-serving commercial from the San Diego Freeway to the four corners of the El Toro Road and Rockfield Boulevard intersection (big-box retail, entertainment center, etc.);
  - community-serving commercial from north of Rockfield Boulevard to Muirlands Boulevard (pro-viding goods and services to Lake Forest, Leisure World, Laguna Hills, Mission Viejo, Foothill Ranch, etc.); and
  - local-serving commercial from Muirlands Boulevard to Trabuco Road (serving local neighborhoods and businesses).
- ❖ Identify opportunities for the development of an entertainment center within the regional or community-serving business districts.
- ❖ Revitalize existing movie theaters within El Toro Road or consolidate them into one mid-sized entertainment center.
- ❖ Add mixed uses, including medical and professional offices, in areas along El Toro Road with existing office uses.
- ❖ Promote the advantages of developing new businesses within the redevelopment area.

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### **COMMUNITY, CIVIC, AND CULTURAL HEART**

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The Corridor currently includes limited community, civic, and cultural uses. Those that are located in the area, such as the library and the post office, are randomly distributed. A cluster of community, civic, and cultural uses would provide the community with a focal point, enhancing the Corridor's attraction to City residents. The inclusion of a community center or live entertainment theater would comprise a valuable resource, available to all members of the community, young and old. City/Agency development of a Community, Civic, and Cultural Center with a full range of community uses will provide a strong signal to the private development community of the City/Agency's commitment to the revitalization and revisioning of the Corridor. In addition, people coming to the Community, Civic, and Cultural Center can provide a base of support for area commercial enterprises.

- ❖ Consider locating community, civic, and cultural-oriented uses within the Corridor to symbolize a long-standing commitment to the area and to promote commerce, recruitment of new businesses, and investment.
- ❖ Community, civic, and cultural uses may include the following:
  - a community and civic center;
  - a library, a fire station, and other civic uses;
  - meeting space, banquet rooms, and community calendar; and
  - a live entertainment theater.

- ❖ Preferred locations should occur in the eastern portion of the Corridor, in the recommended community-serving area.

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### ENHANCE COMMERCIAL CENTER ATTRACTION

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Many of the Corridor's commercial shopping centers are dated, under-performing, or operating at below-industry expectations. The centers can become more attractive through implementation of physical improvements combined with the introduction of retail uses unified by a common theme. In addition, patronage can increase through marketing efforts designed to promote the area and educate the public about the community's commitment to revitalization, and ultimate success in realizing its vision.

- ❖ Encourage center integration and the introduction of retail themes such as entertainment, specialty, and sub-regional retail:
  - leverage through loans and grants;
  - use Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and tax increment funds; and
  - provide access to lower rates of finance.
- ❖ Support center improvements in areas such as safety, signage, facades, internal circulation, and visibility.
- ❖ Provide incentives and promote "after 5:00 p.m." business hours.
- ❖ Implement marketing program with components such as the following:
  - develop uniform promotional graphic;
  - encourage cooperative marketing among area retailers;
  - update and distribute shopping and dining guides; and

- launch public relations program through community/regional outreach to promote the area as a unique shopping district.

- ❖ Host festivals/special events to promote and celebrate the area, such as community fairs, participatory sporting events, food festivals, and concerts.

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### RETAILER ATTRACTION AND RETENTION

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The Corridor is characterized by high retail vacancy and the recent and ongoing departure of major tenants. If the area is to be successfully revitalized, the attraction of new tenants will be critical, along with retention and possible expansion of existing tenants that meet community needs and conform to the community's area image. Strong City/Agency involvement in attraction and retention efforts can supplement property owner and management efforts to improve the area's retail base, signaling the City/Agency's partnership in strengthening and enhancing the Corridor.

- ❖ Designate City/Agency liaison to manage City/Agency efforts and monitor strategy implementation.
- ❖ Partner with center management ownership to demonstrate City/Agency commitment and support private efforts consistent with the strategy.
- ❖ Conduct retention outreach to existing retailers by maintaining regular contact with key businesses, tracking lease expiration dates, and troubleshooting.



- ❖ Conduct outreach to brokerage community/site locators/retailers to attract new tenants to the area. Outreach actions can include the following:
  - initiate contact;
  - assemble and distribute needed information, such as demographics, retail inventory;
  - formulate “Retailer Recruitment Response Team” with key City/Agency and community members;
  - target key retailers/complementary retailers consistent with market analysis; and
  - map the corridor overlaid with major uses and general land use concepts.
- ❖ Attract new anchor tenants or retain existing anchors by using technical and financial assistance.
- ❖ Streamline the development approvals process for major projects and shepherd the project proponent through the process.
- ❖ Foster communication and partnership among key stake-holders. This partnership can support City/Agency efforts, develop promotional materials, and encourage collaboration among area retailers and property owners.
- ❖ Recognize brokerage achievements to enhance the area’s retail base:
  - acknowledge successful leasing efforts;
  - provide public recognition (special events/printed materials); and
  - facilitate exposure to area property owners.

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## MAJOR CENTER IMPROVEMENTS

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All of the Corridor’s major shopping centers, especially those clustered around the critical intersection of El Toro Road and Rockfield Boulevard, could benefit from substantial and major improvements, enhancing their attraction to potential shoppers and contribution to the Corridor’s appearance. These improvements range from facade improvements to physical reconfiguration and major new construction. In addition, many centers or retail areas could become more competitive following major site improvements such as physical integration with neighboring centers. This integration would promote more critical mass in a single location, enhance shopper access to a larger variety of stores, and improve area traffic circulation.

### ❖ El Toro Square and The Shops at Lake Forest:

- physically combine
- improve access
- improve internal circulation
- facade improvements
- parking reconfiguration

### ❖ Wells Fargo and Twin Peaks

- physically combine
- promote circulation between parcels
- major new construction at Wells Fargo Center
- attract sub-regional tenants

## ❖ Saddleback Valley Plaza:

- introduce more effective signage program
- design changes
- reposition to accommodate major tenants

## ❖ Lake Forest Marketplace/Green Thumb Nursery and surrounding uses:

- physically combine
- define a major vehicular entry
- strengthen curb appeal landscape

## ❖ Bell Tower Plaza:

- design changes
- rear facade improvements
- introduce more effective signage program

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**SIGNATURE ARCHITECTURE AND LANDSCAPING**


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The Corridor lacks a sense of place, in that there is no main entrance, or gateway, to the Corridor and there are no unifying architectural or design themes. Most of the Corridor's commercial properties were developed in the 1970s and early 1980s; only a few have since undergone any type of major renovation or physical improvement. As a result, numerous architectural styles are represented in the area, many of which are now dated, and some centers are characterized by the appearance of deferred maintenance. Furthermore, area landscaping is sparse with no common theme representative of the City of Lake Forest.

- ❖ Develop gateway treatment on El Toro Road near I-5 to signify grand entrance to Lake Forest.
- ❖ Create a theme for unifying the myriad architectural styles present along El Toro Road.
- ❖ Treat all large-scale signs as important pieces of architecture.
- ❖ Determine opportunities for enhanced landscaping on outer edges of or parkways along El Toro Road.
- ❖ Encourage and provide guidance for facade improvements to existing structures.
- ❖ Prepare a design palette to guide new development and rehabilitation of existing development.
- ❖ Eliminate or mitigate distracting visual elements from El Toro Road.
- ❖ Provide for design continuity (i.e., architectural features, landscaping, paving patterns, setbacks) to create desired character and to regain the connection between businesses and the street.
- ❖ Bring the "forest" to Lake Forest through signature landscaping treatment.

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**PEDESTRIAN ACCESS AND ENVIRONMENT**


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The Corridor and its major destinations are not pedestrian-friendly. It is difficult for pedestrians to traverse the area, and there are limited pedestrian resting or gathering places. Pedestrian-friendly shopping locations are a benefit to both shoppers and retailers. Pedestrians enjoy a more pleasant shopping experience, and retailers reap greater sales because pedestrians linger to appreciate the environment, extending their shopping visit and increasing their retail expenditures.

### Corridor Improvements

- ❖ Ensure accessibility for persons with disabilities and impairments.
- ❖ Provide an easily understandable wayfinding system along El Toro Road.
- ❖ Ensure pedestrian orientation through lighting, signage, and other measures.

### Commercial Center Improvements

- ❖ Install pedestrian amenities such as benches, trees, lighting, special paving, shade ramadas, drinking fountains, and adequate signage.
- ❖ Encourage pedestrian paseos and plazas in commercial centers and connecting adjacent centers.
- ❖ Identify appropriate design treatments for connecting El Toro commercial centers with adjacent neighborhoods.
- ❖ Utilize “traffic calming” techniques, where appropriate within commercial centers, to enhance the pedestrian environment.
- ❖ Create unique pedestrian areas within and adjacent to commercial centers and adjacent to El Toro Road.
- ❖ Create “Town Square” like spaces and public gathering areas within El Toro commercial centers to encourage a focus of pedestrian activity.

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### ENHANCED TRANSPORTATION CIRCULATION

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The circulation along the Corridor is not supportive of the area’s many commercial establishments. High traffic speeds make ingress and egress to existing shopping centers difficult, as do the location and number of curb cuts and lack of dedicated turning lanes. Select

commercial center parking lot designs also impede internal circulation.

### Corridor Improvements

- ❖ Consider reducing number of traffic lights to enhance traffic flow.
- ❖ Consider reduction of the number of median openings and curb cuts on El Toro Road.
- ❖ Explore the possibility of creating dedicated right-hand turn lanes adjacent to major commercial centers to maintain vehicular flow, capacity, and efficiency on El Toro Road.
- ❖ Improve the look of public street signs and provide an easily understandable public wayfinding system for vehicular users.
- ❖ Determine traffic signal synchronization requirements for El Toro Road to identify opportunities for creating safer pedestrian crossings and slower traffic speeds.

### Commercial Center Improvements

- ❖ Wherever possible, optimize use of major entries into commercial centers and businesses.
- ❖ Functionally integrate existing commercial centers to enhance economic activity and to improve opportunities for inter-site circulation.

## SECTION 3:

# SAMPLE STRATEGY CONCEPT ILLUSTRATIONS

*This strategy section presents two sets of drawings prepared by Urban Design Studio (a division of Robert Bein, William Frost & Associates) illustrating successful implementation of some of the strategy's urban planning and design components. The illustrations pertain to prospective site reconfiguration of a physically integrated Ross Sav-on Center and El Toro Square and prospective facade improvements at the Ross Sav-on Center (a.k.a. The Shops at Lake Forest). These centers were selected only for illustrative purposes. Similar concepts could be applied at multiple locations throughout the Corridor.*

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### SITE PLAN RECONFIGURATION

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Similar to the facade improvement illustrations, the plan reconfiguration illustrations indicate how simple design changes can dramatically alter the appearance and functional operation of two adjacent centers with no previous physical relationship. The existing conditions illustration indicates how the two centers (Ross Sav-on Center and El Toro Square) are located adjacent to each other but are physically segregated (with the exception of a service road connector). The centers feature limited landscaping, no pedestrian elements, and no shared architectural features.

The illustrative site plan for these two centers demonstrates how the introduction of simple design elements and slight reconfiguration can improve site circulation and provide a more exciting shopping

experience, while actually increasing the leasable area at both centers. Some of the major elements of the illustrative site plan include a center connector mall created by relocating only a few leasable retail spaces (many of which are currently vacant), a major entry with access to both centers via a center rotary, common design features to architecturally unify the centers, landscape features, enhanced vehicular entry identification, and pedestrian-oriented elements. These and other related improvements can be achieved with limited investment, likely easily repaid by the rent generated from the increased square footage and boost in overall occupancy as the physically integrated centers become more competitive in the marketplace.

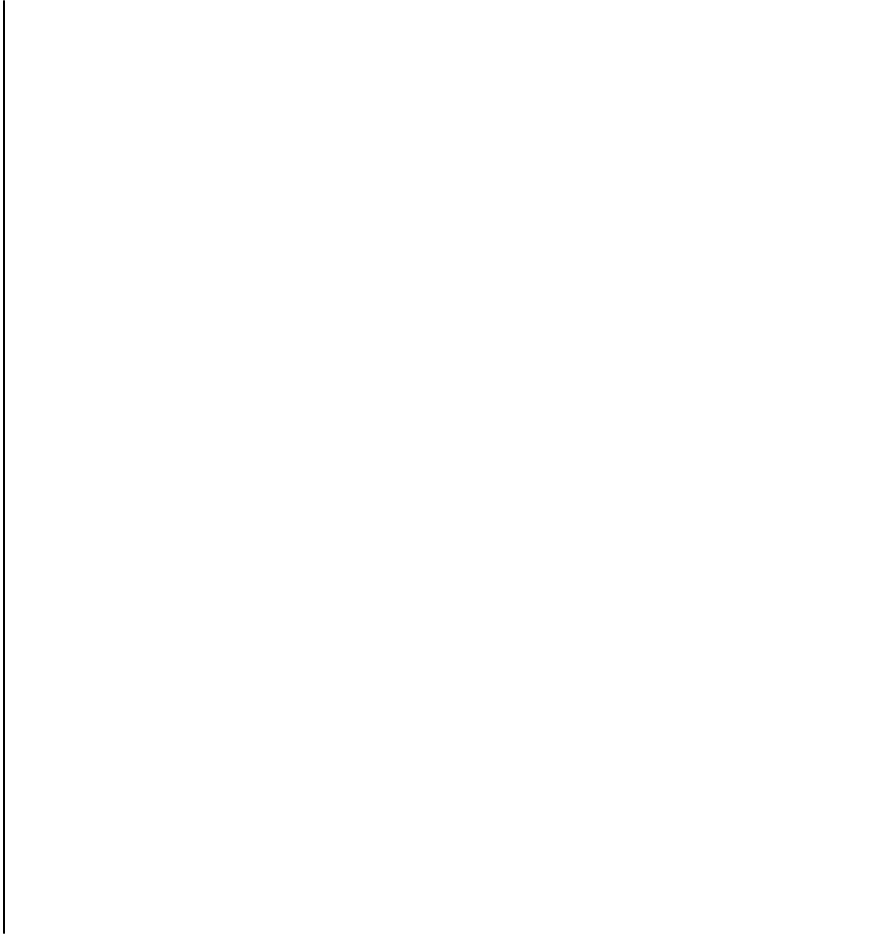
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### FACADE IMPROVEMENT

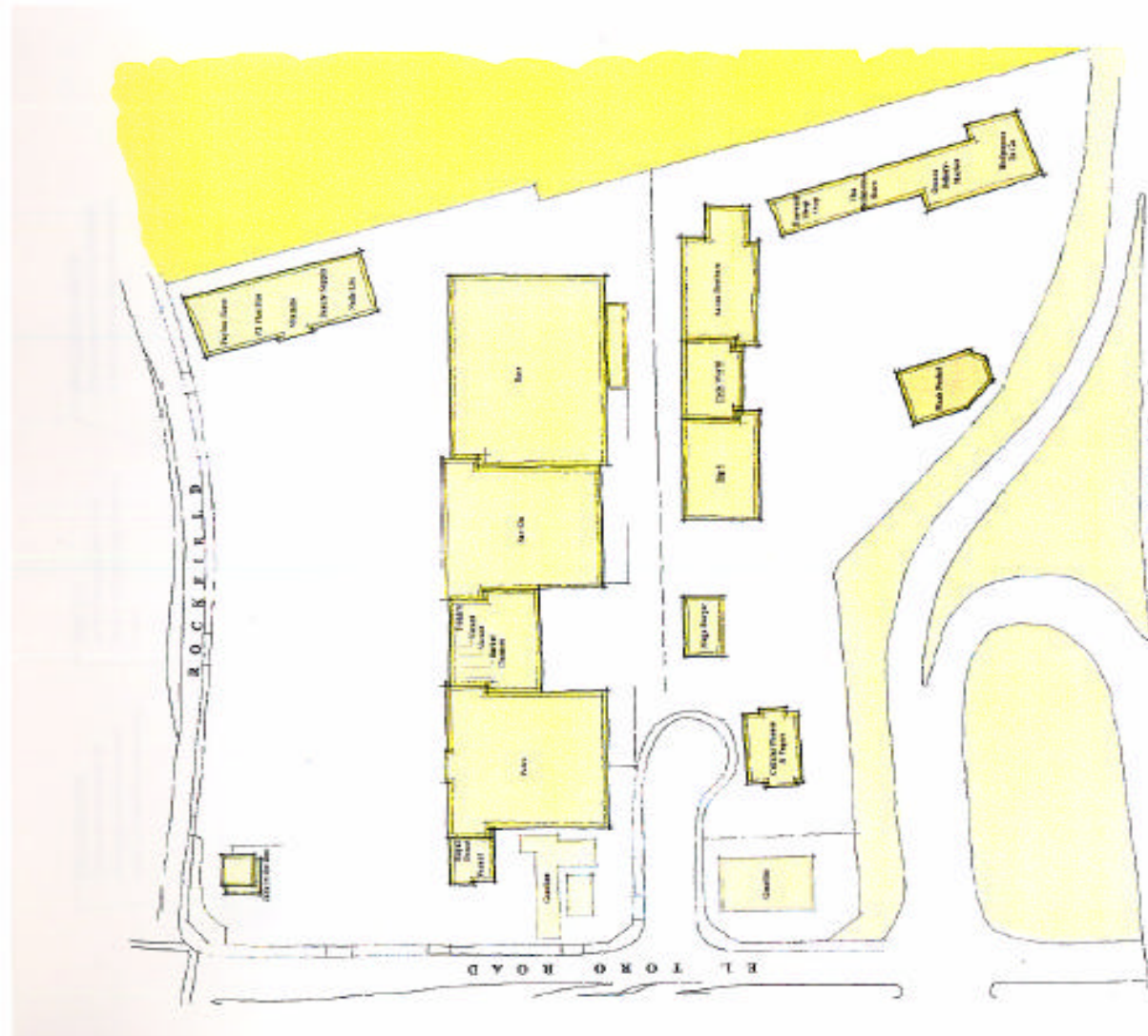
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The facade improvement illustrations suggest how minimal design changes can alter the entire look of a retail establishment, providing a more inviting feel in an aesthetic manner. The existing conditions illustration shows a storefront dominated by signage, poor quality building materials, and an uninviting design. Moreover, the lack of landscaping and poorly surfaced parking lot condition enforce the uninviting feel and are suggestive of deferred maintenance.

The proposed concept illustration maintains all the physical features of the retail establishment (i.e., size, entry location, signature signage) while imparting a complete facelift with only a few minor improvements. The new facade and related site features include high-quality wall materials, an articulated building mass, the addition of tower elements and a roof treatment, enhanced entrance paving, and parking lot landscaping, resurfacing and restriping. All of these features combine to create a retail establishment that projects retailer/property owner pride and provides a pleasant shopping environment.



**Site Plan Reconfiguration Illustrations:  
Existing Conditions and Illustrative Site Plan: Ross Sav-On  
Center and El Toro Square**



## Existing Conditions

### Rockfield and El Toro Road

**Lake Forest, California**

**DR** Robert D. Bell, William West & Associates



**Illustrative Site Plan**  
Rockfield and El Toro Road  
Lake Forest, California

**PE** *repeated injury, 10 volume about 100-1200000*



**Facade Improvement Illustrations:  
Existing Conditions and Proposed Concept, Ross Sav-On  
Center**



EXISTING CONDITIONS

LAKE FOREST, CALIFORNIA  
Ross San-Jon Center  
Facade Improvements





PROPOSED CONCEPT

LAKE FOREST, CALIFORNIA  
Ross San-On Center  
Facade Improvements



## SECTION 4: IMPLEMENTATION TOOLS

*This section identifies implementation tools available to the City/Agency to ensure that Corridor private sector development and redevelopment are consistent with the community vision for the area as articulated in the strategy. Because these tools alone are not sufficient to ensure full realization of the strategy, the section also discusses City/Agency staffing requirements and funding opportunities to help spur private area investment.*

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### **CITY/AGENCY STAFFING COMMITMENT**

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In order for the City/Agency's revitalization and revisioning efforts to be realized, it is recommended that a concerted staffing effort be developed. At minimum, this should include a redevelopment professional whose primary responsibilities include strategy implementation and monitoring. This individual should function as the recommended City/Agency liaison with the local business community and property owners, should actively pursue the recommended retailers' attraction and retention efforts, and should ensure development conformance with the strategy.

One person alone, or even several, cannot be expected to shoulder responsibility for successful strategy implementation. City/Agency staff at many levels and in many departments will also need to participate. Examples of other City/Agency staff efforts supportive of the strategy can include the following: public endorsement of the strategy; planning, economic development, and public works actions

consistent with the strategy; and troubleshooting for existing Corridor tenants.

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### **CITY/AGENCY FUNDING AND RESOURCE COMMITMENT**

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At the time of strategy adoption, the City/Agency does not directly benefit from the tax increment funds generated by the El Toro Corridor. Instead, these funds revert to Orange County, the originator of the redevelopment project area prior to incorporation of the City, and are committed to the repayment of tax increment bonds issued by the County. The City/Agency is seeking to redirect the Corridor's tax increment. When this occurs, a flow of revenues will begin accruing to the City/Agency. Once these revenues achieve a sufficient level, they can be committed by the City/Agency to underwrite redevelopment activities in the Corridor and eventually be pledged to repay tax increment bonds issued exclusively by the City/Agency. These funds can be used for multiple purposes to advance the Corridor's revitalization, ranging from infrastructure improvements to land assemblage to direct subsidies. The level of funds required to support these types of financial incentives, however, are not likely to accrue to the City/Agency until well into strategy implementation, such as late in the mid-term phase or even later.

Even without the City/Agency's accrual of the Corridor's tax increment funds there are additional financial incentives that can be provided to property owners and retailers. These include City/Agency extension of its tax exempt status to private interests (hence providing access to lower rates of financing), sales tax rebates for a certain specified period of time, and other potential financing mechanisms. In addition, the City/Agency can apply CDBG funds in a number of ways, such as the provision of loans and grants for facade improvement.

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## REGULATORY MECHANISMS

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Two major regulatory mechanisms are recommended to the City/Agency to ensure area development consistent with the strategy. These include the preparation and adoption of interim design guidelines and a specific plan, both of which require legal compliance by area developers and redevelopers.

### Interim Design Guidelines

A set of interim design guidelines will be prepared by Urban Design Studio as a companion document to this strategy. These interim design guidelines will provide basic standards for planning and design components that are common to all or most types of commercial development in the Corridor. The interim guidelines also will provide for Planning Commission review of all development activity in the Corridor to ensure consistency with the strategy's goals until more detailed design guidelines are formulated as a part of the recommended specific plan (see next recommendation).

Specific categories included in the interim design guidelines will be as follows:

- ❖ Site planning
- ❖ Parking and circulation
- ❖ Building architecture
- ❖ Landscaping
- ❖ Service stations/mini-marts and car washes
- ❖ Drive-through or drive-in businesses
- ❖ General sign design guidelines
- ❖ Outdoor seating guidelines

The interim design guidelines will be prepared to provide design options while assuring that area development conveys a positive, inviting, and signature look for Lake Forest, creating an image of the City/Agency in keeping with its name.

### Specific Plan

Whereas the interim design guidelines will regulate the look, appearance, and site placement of land uses, a specific plan will provide the City/Agency with a more comprehensive regulatory tool to guide the Corridor's form, shape, and function. The specific plan can designate the location of specific types of land uses. For example, the specific plan can formalize this plan's tiered districting recommendations, can designate the location for the proposed community, civic, and cultural center, and can provide a traffic plan to ease area circulation.

The specific plan should be developed in association with the community, involving multiple opportunities for community input ensuring continuity and refinements of the vision reflected in this strategy. Significant outreach efforts should also be made to include property owners and developers in this process. Given the City/Agency's and community's concerns for the area, the specific plan is recommended to include the following components:

- ❖ Goals and objectives
- ❖ Traffic study and parking analysis
- ❖ Land use plan
- ❖ Custom zoning regulations
- ❖ Design guidelines (including center-specific)
- ❖ Streetscape plan
- ❖ Capital Improvement Budget
- ❖ Implementation program

Adoption of a Corridor Specific Plan will ensure development in accordance with the community vision. The City/Agency should promptly initiate preparation of the specific plan to build upon the community involvement and support that have already been generated by this strategizing effort and to promote revitalization of the area.

## Section 5: Strategy Priorities

*This final strategy section recommends prioritization of the strategy components and related implementation tools. Action priorities are established for three time periods, each representative of a different phase of revitalization. The overall timeline for strategy implementation is anticipated to extend over a decade or more, with the City/Agency's efforts and demonstrated commitment leading the way for private sector reinvestment and development consistent with the community's image.*

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### NEAR-TERM (SETTING THE STAGE)

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Near-term actions are the ones that need to occur in order to “set the stage” for the Corridor’s revitalization and revisioning. These are the preparatory steps required to formalize the main concepts of the strategy and create the mechanisms to guide area renovation and development consistent with the strategy. Adoption of a specific plan that incorporates detailed design guidelines, the land use concept, and City/Agency commitment to create a community, civic, and cultural center will comprise the culmination of this phase.

- ❖ Designate City/Agency liaison to communicate with business community.
- ❖ Adopt the Revitalization and Revisioning Strategy, including endorsement of the commercial land use concept.
- ❖ City/Agency create, adopt and implement interim design guidelines.

- ❖ Identify parameters, size, and function for the community, civic, and cultural center.
- ❖ Formulate and adopt specific plan including a traffic study and detailed design guidelines.

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### MID-TERM (PRIMING THE PUMP)

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The mid-term priority actions will “prime the pump” for the area’s revitalization. The cornerstone for this phase will be demonstration of the City/Agency’s commitment to the Corridor through the initiation of highly visible public improvements that will directly benefit the Corridor. In addition, the City/Agency should make a strong commitment to promotional efforts targeted to attracting new retail and commercial establishments and retaining existing ones that conform to the community’s image for the area.

The Corridor’s shopping centers are aging and approaching the point at which major investment will be required to ensure market competitiveness. Therefore, the City/Agency should encourage and, if necessary, support redevelopment of at least one major center or integration of two existing centers to serve as a catalyst for additional redevelopment. The City/Agency should additionally encourage other private investment activities, such as other center improvements and center integration projects.

- ❖ Implement Corridor-related architecture and landscaping improvements.
- ❖ Strongly implement marketing and retailer attraction/retention programs.
- ❖ Encourage redevelopment of one center/integrated center (e.g., entertainment or sub-regional).
- ❖ Encourage center integration.
- ❖ Support center improvements.
- ❖ Promote evening use.
- ❖ Promote uses that encourage and provide opportunities for people to gather.

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### **LONG-TERM (CONTINUING EFFORTS)**

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The long-term actions will ensure that the community will reap the benefits of public and private investment activities. During this phase, the City/Agency should continue its efforts to spur area redevelopment, both through interaction with property owners and its own promotional efforts. Many of the mid-term activities should be continued, ensuring continual demonstration of the City/Agency's commitment to the Corridor's revitalization. In addition, once a critical mass of redevelopment has occurred, the City/Agency should initiate new activities, such as implementation of Corridor pedestrian and traffic improvements. The City/Agency could also promote complementary commercial development, such as office development, geared toward diversifying the area's economic base and providing a broader base of support for the area's retail establishments. Finally, festivals and special events can be held to continually acknowledge and celebrate the City/Agency, community, property owner, and retailer efforts that culminated in the revitalization and revisioning of the Corridor.

### **Continue to:**

- ❖ Encourage redevelopment of all remaining major centers.
- ❖ Encourage center integration.
- ❖ Support center improvements.
- ❖ Promote evening use.
- ❖ Implement marketing and retailer attraction/retention programs.
- ❖ Promote uses that encourage and provide opportunities for people to gather.

### **New Activities:**

- ❖ Implement Corridor pedestrian and transportation improvements.
- ❖ Encourage office development.
- ❖ Host and promote festivals/special events to celebrate a revitalized Corridor.